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BAY RANCH

• R E V I E W •

C

July • 2023

**Issue 5
47th Year**

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BAY RANCH MOBILE VILLAGE Park Management

The Clubhouse is open, and many activities are up and running. Status of activities will change as snowbirds return. Check the bulletin board at the clubhouse for updates on activities.

Bay Ranch Village LLC, 7349 Ulmerton, Largo, FL 33771

Manager Carol Alvey
 Maintenance Wayne Perkins
 Office Telephone 531-0761
 Emergencies 510-7730
 518-210-8042
 Email bayranchmh@gmail.com
 Office Open Monday, Wednesday, Friday
 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon & 1:00-3:00 p.m
 Office Closed..... Tuesday & Thursday

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BAY RANCH HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President.....	Jeanne Hunter	Coach 1314	727-432-9792
Vice President	Jim Loude	Coach 1035	651-207-9939
Secretary	Rosemary Reynolds	Coach 1317	267-819-5013
Treasurer	Ben Adair	Coach 1346	317-946-0993
Director	Roger Heil.....	Coach 104.....	727-423-1264
Director	Kathy Trombini.....	Coach 259.....	727-831-5144

2023 RESIDENTS' CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Kathy Trombini	Coach 259	727-831-5144
Vice President	Patty Harwood.....	Coach 1395	240-505-5893
Secretary	Paige Andrews	Coach 113	727-543-9871
Treasurer	Sharon Van Horn	Coach 1354	828-318-5837
Board of Directors	Charlotte Augustine.....	Coach 1413	727-678-4493
.....	Beverly Gray	Coach 1413	727-932-1270
.....	Cathy Griffin.....	Coach 244	315-783-7701
.....	Evelyn Hale	Coach 1364	727-403-6434
.....	Paul Puerling	Coach 170	727-533-9324
.....	Joan Seiders.....	Coach 123	727-532-8409
.....	Mary Ward.....	Coach 175	727-424-8923

Bay Ranch Review

Cathy Griffin.....	Editor	Coach 244	315-783-7701	cat846@yahoo.com
Cindy Devinney.....	Members	Coach 1342	550-7377	
Wayne Redshaw.....	Profiles	Coach 1392	536-8201	
Jeanne Hunter		Coach 1314	432-9792	
Cathy Seiders.....	Delivery	Coach 276	543-0757	

Wanted one-time or monthly articles. Contact Cathy Griifn.

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Bay Ranch Services

Library	Jeanr Hunter	Coach 1314
.....	Paige Andrews.....	Coach 113

Books in the library are donated by Bay Ranchers. The library is especially looking for large print books. All donations are accepted. We always have more books than we can shelf. Extras are donated to AMVETS and the

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John 3:16

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Managers Moment

Carol Alvey



MANAGER

Renting?? This is a big NO NO. There is no more renting and has been brought to the manager's attention this is happening and the office was not notified. This is a rule violation, and it is also not fair to others.

Water: There are reports off residents not shutting off their hoses and flooding is occurring in yards and under coaches. Please remember to shut the water off when finished.

Big dumpsters are still a problem with residents putting mattresses, coaches and other large items in the dumpster, etc. This dumpster is for management use only. You must dispose of these items off site.

JUST SAYIN'

Jeanne Hunter

A burglar broke into my house last week. I put the red dot on his chest and the cat did the rest. If you don't get that, ask a cat person.

Here's another useless, but interesting fact I read. In Victorian England, the lowest, cheapest form of accommodation was a rope strung up between buildings. For a penny, you could just lay across the rope and fall asleep standing there. This was usually used by drunken sailors who had spent all their money drinking. It's said to be the origin of the term "hangover."

This morning, Cathy Griffin asked me if I had a column ready. Today is the due date. I did not and explained to her why not. Last Tuesday morning when I got up, I had no Internet. I began to tick off how many appliances in my house needed the internet and a cold chill ran down my spine when I remembered my smart coffee pot was on Wi-Fi. Good news! I can still make coffee, but the pot doesn't report my drink to anyone.

Wi-Fi came back on my phone, so I went to my computer to see if it was connected. Nope. I also checked with our beloved Spectrum to see if there was an outage in the area – no outage. Five minutes in to trying to fix the computer while perfecting my off-color vocabulary, a text from Spectrum arrives telling me the outage in my area is fixed and thanking me for my patience. Hmmm, that's all I can repeat here. But wait, nothing works yet. So, I do all the unplugging and waiting and smiling with anticipation and... nothing. Next step is the online chat with Spectrum. I can do this with my phone which is offline but still working. Sometimes on chat you can type in your problem, but mostly they give you choices and if you can't pick one you don't have a problem. Actually, I think they know many of us have expanded our vocabularies while trying to fix Spectrum problems and they don't want us to get very descriptive with the chat robots. They might blow a fuse.

...continued on page 6



My next step was to contact a live person. This is not an easy task. With fear in my heart and tears in my eyes, I began. I clicked on contact us. I got past chat and email, and another click or two took me to a real phone number. I dialed and held my breath. It rang twice and an automated menu started. Yes, I speak English and my problem is internet outage. A few questions later and the robot gave up and connected me to a real live (I think) person. Once again, I unplugged and waited. The agent decided I needed new equipment because everything shows it's working at their end.

Off to the Spectrum store I went. I got a new modem and router and instructions to connect them. I also signed up for the Spectrum app with 73 channels (made up of all those channels you scroll by in your guide and wonder who would watch them). Why, you ask, would I do this? Well, it will cost \$5 less than I currently pay because it's special. Of course, that's Spectrum math. That's the price before the fees, but I still save a dollar or two.

Back home, connect everything and wait. Same problem. Once again through the maze, I manage to speak with a real live person who decides the next step is a repairman. I luck out. There was a cancellation, and I got an appointment window of 5 PM to 6 PM. Very helpful repairman who explains in detail. At this point you will get the plain English explanation because I forgot most of the terminology he used. We all have a connector box outside somewhere and mine is in the yard in the empty lot next door. It hadn't been opened in years. It was filled with a big beehive which was abandoned. There is little control inside, and our signals come through bands on this. Mine was set to block certain bands and when Spectrum was working on the system that morning, they changed bands to ones my controller blocked. So, that got all fixed and hurrah, my internet worked. The repairman got my tv connected and running fine. As he was leaving, I was again trying to connect my computer and getting nowhere. After two minutes, he explained to me that my computer was 2.4 and the new Spectrum equipment I got today was 5.0, but I could get a Wi-Fi adapter and then my computer could attach to the new equipment. Ordered from Amazon for \$20 and it arrived the next day. Plugged it I, downloaded the setup and all was well. Except I still couldn't get online.

The computer was not working, I couldn't do a column. Also, I had workers coming in to work under my mobile on the vapor barrier and also putting in a new floor in one of my bedrooms. The project manager had told me they would be able to take up my vinyl plank flooring and put it back down, but when the guys that really did the work came, they said no way. So, it was agreed they would pull it up, fix the floor and come back later this week or next to put the new floor down. When they first got here there were five of them moving furniture and stuff out of the room and I found out one of them had two little boys, two and five. I have a collection of Hess trucks I've been buying for years, but my grandkids have finally outgrown them. Hess trucks are very cool. They have lights and sounds and movement. I had a couple sitting out and asked the man if he would like them for his kids. Definitely! The bed in this room has a drawer underneath big enough to hold a mattress. It was filled with more trucks. One of them pulled the drawer out and instantly there were five little boys instead of grown

continued on page 8

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men. For the next ten minutes, they oohed and aahed and tested all the buttons and just played. Back to being grown up, a few hours later the work was done, except most of the bedroom stuff stayed out of the room since they would be putting in the vinyl plank floor in a few days. Now my couches are filled with pillows and blankets and stuff from shelves. And if I use ethernet cables I can plug my computer directly into the router and it will work. So now my computer is on a tv tray, and it is plugged into the router on a corner table in the living room. I'm bent over it typing away. There is still a small path to walk through the room.

Remember, it's never too late to be what you want to be. Unless you want to be younger, then you're screwed.

So now you know why there is no column this month. Next month I'll tell you how the battle of the kitty door is going.

Thanks Jeanne, we all appreciate the time you put onto this and make us have a least one more smile.

Ambulance Fund,

Evelyn Hale, Coach 1364 727-403-6434

The Ambulance Fund is open to all residents for \$2.50 per person per year. Payment qualifies members for 1 emergency transport per person per year. The fund pays the balance of the bill, up to \$75, after Medicare and insurance. Membership period is stated on your card. There are no grace days.



Coach 269 Sharon Hunt Due on 7/7

Welcome New Residents to Bay Ranch

The following is the names of new residents to Bay Ranch. Please take a little time when you meet them to welcome them and invite them to take part in the many activities that are going on in our park.

- Richard Quirk Coach 220
- Patty Hardy Coach 117
- Gilbardo Patino Coach 188



Welcome to Bay Ranch

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John 3:16

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Carol Zapiecki, Clearwater, FL



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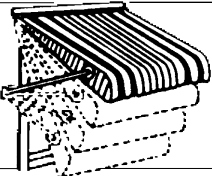
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Residents We Have Lost

I was asked if we could acknowledge friends and neighbors, we have lost. I will try the best I can, but not knowing everyone who is living here, please let me know if you know of someone.

Roger Couta



From the Resident's Club:

The residents club will send emails to keep residents informed of upcoming activities. Please add your email to the list in the club house bulletin board or share with Paige on Facebook.

July Happenings

Chicken BBQ is happening on the 4th. You will find delicious chicken, salads, cheesy potatoes, beans, pickles, watermelon, and lemonade. All for only \$8.00. Happy Hour is 12-1, and we will begin serving at 1. Bring your own tableware and come on down to celebrate our country's freedom with your friends and neighbors for this all you can eat meal.

Back again: Game night will be on the 10th at 7pm. Games are provided or bring your favorite. Don't forget beverages and snacks. Who can play a game without Popcorn??



Ice Cream Social will be held on Sunday July 16th at 3pm. Cost is \$3.00 and we will have all the fix-ins including sugar free ice cream to make your very own ice cream sundae.



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Clubs and Activities

Bid Euchre

On break until fall.



Bingo

Cindy Devinney 550-7377



We start selling at 5pm. We stop selling at 6pm and Bingo starts at 6:30.
We need more people to come, so we can continue to play through the summer.
So come on down for a night of fun, and who knows, you might even win .
Please no large bills.

Canasta

We will meet every Tuesday at 1:00

Card Bingo

Debbie and Roger Heil, Coach 104, 423-1264

1st and 3rd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. July dates are the 5th & 19th.
This is Bingo where every 4-some (and sometimes 3-somes) deal out a full deck of cards, then discard the card as the caller calls it. Whoever runs out of cards first wins the pot of 1 quarter for each player.
Please sign up in the clubhouse and bring 12 quarters.



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Chair Exercises/Water Aerobics

Sharon Van Horn 828-318-5937



With the warmer weather here, chair exercises inside has ended. Everyone, come join us in the pool Tuesday and Thursday 9-10am for some great exercise and comradery. . Bring water weights if you have them or a couple of empty jugs such as laundry, bleach, etc. Will do just fine.

Choir

Becky Webber

The Bay Ranch Chorus is seeking a pianist either in Bay Ranch or in the surrounding area to accompany us this fall for our Christmas Concert and our Memorial Service. If you know anyone who may be qualified and interested, please contact me.

Becky Webber Chorus Director.



CORN HOLE

Dawn Fear-walters

Corn hole is held next to the shuffle board courts. Every Tuesday at 7pm.



CRAFTS

Crafts are held whenever anyone has a project to share, we can get together and do.

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Euchre

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Golf

Jim Jones 605-730-1264

Golf is now on summer hiatus.



HOA

The HOA helps with issues that may come up and works on rent negotiations as they come up. You can join the HOA there is a one-time fee of \$20.00 to join.



Horseshoes

Horseshoes are done until fall. All inquiries for future dates and players, contact Rich Haslam Lot 331. 727-492-6966



Hoss Collar

Paul Perling 533-9324

Guess what folks, we are now done until next fall.

Karaoke

Adam Pirhofer 623-7808

Karaoke will be the last Saturday of the month.

Bring your voice, beverages and you down on the 29th of July and join in the fun and entertainment. As usual subject to change.

If you can sing or not come out and join in the fun, there is no judging here. Want some free entertainment? Come on down to the clubhouse and enjoy the music and cheer on your fellow Rancher.

You read it here first: If you or anyone you know play any kind of instrument and just want to get together; contact Adam and he will try to set up something. Who doesn't love a good jam session?



LADIES HAVING FUN

*Evelyn Hale 727-403-6434
Cindy Douglas 260-715-0646*

Ladies will be meeting the last Friday of the month. The date for July is the 28th at 11:30. Sign sheet will be up in the clubhouse if you would like to go.

Library

Come on in and borrow a book or drop off the ones you have read. Please put books in the tote and we will put them back on the shelf. Looking for any large print books. Sorry. No magazines please



Shuffleboard

Both the Sunshine and Friendly leagues are done for the season. See you in the fall.



Stein Studs

Adam Pirhofer 623-7808

Everyone is welcome to join us on Fridays or actually any day you want to get together and try the many different craft beers offered in the area. We meet at Willards on Friday at 2pm.

Swedish weaving/needlework

Nancy Peterson

This also is on a break until fall.



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
<p>AUGUST</p> <p>S M T W T F S</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>6 7 8 9 10 11 12</p> <p>13 14 15 16 17 18 19</p> <p>20 21 22 23 24 25 26</p> <p>27 28 29 30 31</p>		
	2	3
	8:00 Koffee Klatch 9:00 Residents' Club	9:00 W 7:00 pm Chicke noon Indep
	9	10
	8:00 Koffee Klatch 9:00 Residents' Club Food Pantry at noon Game Night 7pm	9:00 W 7:00 pm
	16	17
Ice Cream Social at 3pm	8:00 Koffee Klatch 9:00 Residents' Club	9:00 W 7:00 pm
	23	24
	8:00 Koffee Klatch 9:00 Residents' Club	9:00 W 7:00 pm
	30	31
	8:00 Koffee Klatch 9:00 Residents' Club	

The purpose of our Federation is to promote the general welfare of its members, protect the rights and interests of, and be a consumer advocate

FOR MANUFACTURED/MOBILE HOME OWNERS ON RENTED LOTS

Our accomplishments are numerous and include the creation of Florida Statute 723, "The Florida Mobile Home Act", which safeguards your rights as homeowners on rented lots in Florida.

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Bay Ranch

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1
4 Water Exercise in Corn Hole in BBQ at Independence Day	5 Card Bingo 6pm	6 9:00 Water Exercise	7 2:00 Stein Studs* *or Saturday 6:30 Bingo	8
11 Water Exercise in Corn Hole	12	13 9:00 Water Exercise	14 2:00 Stein Studs* *or Saturday 6:30 Bingo	15
18 Water Exercise in Corn Hole	19 Card Bingo 6pm	20 9:00 Water Exercise	21 2:00 Stein Studs* *or Saturday 6:30 Bingo	22
25 Water Exercise in Corn Hole	26	27 9:00 Water Exercise	28 Ladies Having Fun the 11:30 2:00 Stein Studs* *or Saturday 6:30 Bingo	29 Karoke 6:30

SUB-FLOOR & FLOORING EXPERTS!

COVID-19 NOTICE:

We are taking as many precautions as we can to ensure not only our workers safety but yours as well. We are checking employee temperatures daily, limiting contact between crews, and offering no customer contact if you choose. We are an "Essential Business" and here for you when you need us.

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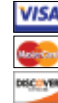
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Radiance of the Seas will be departing the Tampa Cruise Port and returning.

There is a \$100 deposit for each person booking into a cabin.

Optional Travel Insurance is available for \$39.00 pp for Inside cabins and ocean view cabins. \$59.00 pp for balcony.

The option for a r/t bus trip was very expensive so we can reserve 10 passenger Super Shuttle vans at a cost of \$360 r/t for \$360 including tip or \$36.00 per person.

A bus has been secured and the cost is equivalent to the price you would pay for parking. Please let Glen at Star Travel know if you are interested when booking. Attach your Crown & Anchor number to your reservation.

Early dining room dining is 5:30 pm. Late dining is 8:00 pm. Anytime dining is when a table is available.

\$50 onboard credit.

Invite family and friends as everyone is welcome.

Call Glen Johansen at Star Travel at 7275848124 ASAP to reserve the cabin type and ship location before availability is gone. And mention you are booking under Bay Ranch Cruisers. Information will be posted on the clubhouse travel board. More information to follow.

Residents' Club

9:00 a.m. Mondays, Clubhouse

This is the “official” meeting of/for Bay Ranch residents to hear about on-going and up-coming social events. This is strictly a club that is responsible for and sets up social functions only.

Koffee Klatch

8 a.m. Mondays in the Clubhouse



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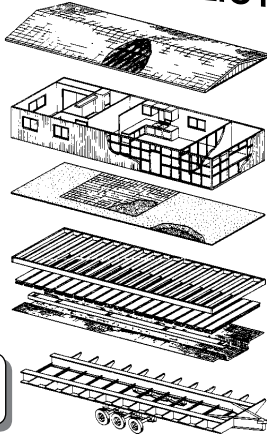
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Bay Ranch Recycle

Please drop off any aluminum cans and bottles at Lot 191 on Carmen Street. Pull tabs are given to Shriners Childrens Hospital. All proceeds from the sale of aluminum provides funds to the Bay Ranch Horseshoes.

Please do not crush cans prior to drop off.

Food Pantry

The food pantry will be held on Monday July 10th at noon.



Birthdays and Anniversaries

By Cindy Devinney, Coach 1342, 550-7377

July Birthdays 2023

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2. Ron Wiseman
Paul Murray | 18. Robert Galloway
Patricia Gardner |
| 3. Paul McGarth
Mary Sue Thompson | 20. Adisa Smith |
| 9. William (Jan) Raabe | 21. Nancy Peterson |
| 11. Jean Fostvedt | 23. Lucille Stearns |
| 12. Gilbert Mulrooney | 26. Linda Goldstein
Roger Heil |
| 13. Patricia Verzoni | 27. Autumn Huff |
| 14. James Moody | 28. Andy Padel |
| 16. Mark Burguron Winter
Trever Galloway | 31. Ron Griffin |



July Anniversaries 2023

- 17. Richard & Joan Haslam
- 22. Brian & Jeannie Gill
- 23. Robert & Bonnie Sterry
- 25. Tom & Patricia Gardner
- 26. Michael & Karen Helmer
- 28. Ron & Cathy Griffin
- 30. Jerry & Kathy LaBean



History Mystery

Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.
John F. Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.

Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860.
John F. Kennedy was elected President in 1960.

Both were particularly concerned with civil rights.
Both wives lost their children while living in the White House.

Both Presidents were shot on a Friday.
Both Presidents were shot in the head

Now it gets weird.

Lincoln 's secretary was named Kennedy.
Kennedy's Secretary was named Lincoln.

Both were assassinated by Southerners.
Both were succeeded by Southerners named Johnson.

Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.
Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.

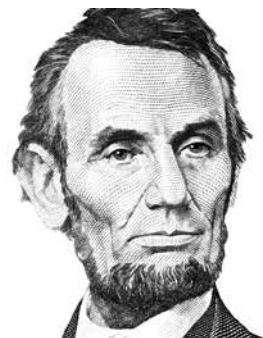
John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839.
Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939.
Both assassins were known by their three names.
Both names are composed of fifteen letters.

Now hang on to your seat.

Lincoln was shot at the theater named 'Ford.'
Kennedy was shot in a car called ' Lincoln ' made by 'Ford.'

Lincoln was shot in a theater and his assassin ran and hid in a warehouse.
Kennedy was shot from a warehouse and his assassin ran and hid in a theater.

Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials.



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And here's the kicker...

A week before Lincoln was shot, he was in Monroe , Maryland

A week before Kennedy was shot, he was with Marilyn Monroe

Funnies

Submitted by Jack Lees

1. Two times a week, we go to a nice restaurant, have a little beverage, good food and companionship, She goes on Tuesdays, I go on Fridays.
2. I take my wife everywhere.....but she keeps finding here way back.
3. We always hold hands. If I let her go, she shops.
4. My wife told me the car wasn't running well bevause there was water in the carbureator. I asked where the car was and she told me "in the lake".



BAY RANCH FERAL CATS

Submitted By Barb Lehman

I would like to take this opportunity to address several issues on behalf of our feral cat population.

1. We will never, ever, ever eliminate all the cats.
2. They did not choose this life; it was chosen for them.
3. We can, however, control the number of cats and their treatment.

TNVR programs work and is the best-case scenario. I have been doing this for over 3 years and it has definitely made a difference in the number of cats in our park. In that time close to 50 kittens were caught, fostered, and adopted out to loving homes. Yay for them!

If residents cooperate, we can make life easier for humans and cats.

To the person who may be intentionally putting out poison, just STOP! It is a very cruel, slow, and painful death. If you are caught, you will be turned into authorities.

Please read the related brochure and if you have any questions or concerns reach out to Friends of Strays or me.

Thank you.



SOLUTIONS

TO CAT-RELATED ISSUES



THE VALUE OF TNVR FOR EVERYBODY

Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) is the most effective and humane way to reduce the number of community cats and reported nuisance behaviors. In a TNVR program, cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated against rabies, and returned to their community to live out their lives. Because they can no longer breed, the number of cats is reduced naturally over time. Nuisance behaviors are typically reduced immediately and eliminated completely only a month after surgery.

CAT CAREGIVER: Most of the time, the cat caregiver did not create the community cat problem. Compassion is what prompts caregivers to feed community cats. Many caregivers do not realize they are resources out there to help them care for the cats and resolve any cat-related issues.

CAT COMPLAINTS: Community Cats become a nuisance to neighbors when they eliminate in their gardens, yowl at night, and spray smelly urine. Removing the cats will not solve these problems; new cats or unvaccinated animals will move into a deserted territory. There are a number of affordable humane deterrents available to help keep unwanted community cats away.

TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Help community cats be good neighbors:

- Keep the feeding stations neat and tidy. Remove all trash and leftover food promptly.
- Feed the cats at a regular place and time during play-light hours and only feed enough to last one feeding. This practice will help the cats get on a schedule and won't attract other wildlife.
- Establish a little box or stand area you clean regularly to discourage the cats from eliminating in unwanted areas.
- Provide a shelter so the cats are not nesting in places where they are not wanted.
- Know your local laws and ordinances. Protect yourself and the cats by knowing your legal rights.
- Share information with your neighbors and keep an ongoing dialog with them. Make sure the deterrents or solutions are working for them.
- Keep accurate records on how many cats you care for and when they were spayed/neutered and vaccinated.

HUMANE DETERRENENTS

SMELLS THAT REPEL CATS To keep cats out of yards or gardens, plant the herb rue or sprinkle dried-rue. Tie Irish Spring soap to a bush or tree branch. Citrus or lemon scents, garlic, ammonia, vinegar, coffee grounds, pipe tobacco, citronella, or eucalyptus all deter cats as well. Scents diminish over time, so re-applying is necessary.

NEUTRALIZE ODORS Odor Ban, Nature's Miracle, Fission and Simple Solutions are effective natural enzyme products that eliminate existing odors, such as urine. They are available at pet supply stores or online.

BLOCK OFF ACCESS Cats seek out dry, warm shelters away from the elements. Block off access to places, such as under the house or porch, in which you don't want cats. Make sure no cats are inside before doing so. Consider providing another low cost shelter nearby to encourage the cat to stay away from those areas.

WATER A motion-activated springer, like ScareCrow, has an infrared sensor that releases a three-second blast of water when a cat or other large animal approaches. You can find this and similar sprinkler-type repellents online.

SOUND A motion-activated, solar-powered, ultrasonic pest repeller emits a high-pitched sound that repels cats and other animals, but can't be heard by humans. Amazon and other online retailers sell such sonic repellents.

DIGGING DETERRENENTS Push chopsticks into potted plants. Use pinecones, lava rocks, concrete paver or stones as mulch to prevent cats from digging. Place larger river rocks throughout the gardens or use poultry fencing or landscaping wrap around plants.

BIRDS If feeding birds, do not overfeed. Seed spilled onto the ground brings birds out of the safety of the trees and into a cat's predatory range. Consider planting bushes and trees that naturally attract birds.

July 4th Recipes

Graham Cracker Flags

To make graham cracker flags, you will need:

- 1 package red, white, and blue M&Ms
- 6 full sheets of graham crackers, broken into 12 squares.
- 1/4 cup white chocolate chip or candy melts
- White frosting
- 12 paper straws

Each 10.7 oz bag of red, white, and blue M&Ms will have enough candy to make 11-12 flags (you will have additional blue M&Ms left over). To make about 22 treats you'll want 2 packages of M&Ms, 12 full graham cracker sheets, and 1/2 cup white chocolate chips. One tub of frosting will easily make a double batch of flags.



How To Make Graham Cracker Flags

There are only 2 steps to making the graham cracker flags.

The first step is using melted white chocolate to “glue” the graham crackers to the paper straws. I recommend doing this part in advance because you need to let the melted white chocolate set up for 15-30 minutes and that can make kids impatient. It’s easiest to just do this step on your own first, and then gather the kids when it’s time to decorate.

To assemble the flags, start by trimming the paper straws to 4.5 or 5 inches long. Then place 1/4 cup of white chocolate chips in a small zip top bag and microwave it in 20 second intervals until the white chocolate is completely melted.

Then snip a corner off the zip top bag and pipe white chocolate along one shorter edge of the graham cracker square. Press a straw up against the white chocolate.

Place the graham cracker down on parchment or wax paper and allow it to set up for 15-30 minutes until solid. Once the chocolate has completely set, you’ll be able to pick up the flag via the straw and it won’t fall apart.

Once the flags are assembled, you can gather the kids and start decorating! Just spread an even layer of white frosting on top of the graham cracker:

And then place red, white, and blue M&Ms on the graham cracker to mimic the look of the US flag:

**A Complete Listing of Resident Services
can be found on the page before your calendar**

Feeling Less Sharp?

28 ★ 3

Your Brain May Need More Sound

When your brain lacks access to some sounds due to a hearing problem, it has to work harder to fill in gaps, which can be tiring. It also means you could be missing out or feeling that you are not at your best.

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FIRECRACKER CAKE

yield: 12 prep time: 15 minutes cook time: 45 minutes. total time: 1 hour

Show your patriotism with this Firecracker Cake! The red, white, and blue runs inside and out!! Great for Memorial Day, the 4th of July or any occasion you want to share a little American pride!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 box (15.25 oz.) white cake mix.
- Water, vegetable oil and egg whites called for on cake mix
- Red food coloring (see note)
- Blue food coloring (see note)
- 1 container (12 oz.) white frosting
- Red, white and blue sprinkles, optional



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven according to cake mix directions. Generously grease and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan; set aside.
2. Make cake batter as directed on box, using water, oil and egg whites. Pour 1 cup of the batter into a small bowl; stir in red food coloring until well mixed. Pour another cup of the batter into a separate bowl; stir in blue food color until well mixed.
3. Pour red cake batter into bottom of pan. Carefully pour the white batter over the red batter in pan. Carefully pour blue batter over white batter. (The blue batter does not need to cover the white batter completely). When you add the batter to the pan, do not mix with a spoon. Just pour it in so the colors don't mix but rather, just rest on top of each other in the pan.
4. Bake as directed on box or until toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool cake for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, place cooling rack over cook-ie sheet. Turn pan upside down onto cooling rack. Cool cake completely, about 30-45 minutes.
5. When cake is cool, divide the frosting evenly into 3 microwavable bowls. Microwave 1 bowl of frosting uncovered on HIGH a few seconds until smooth enough to drizzle over cake. With spoon, drizzle all of the 1st bowl of microwaved frosting all over the cake, back and forth around the cake in a striping pattern. Repeat microwaving second bowl of frosting until smooth. Stir in a few drops of the blue food coloring until well blended. Drizzle over cake, scattering back and forth. Repeat with re-maining frosting and red food coloring, making sure red, white and blue can be seen on the cake. Sprinkle with red, white and blue sprinkles, if de-sired. Let cake stand at room temperature until frosting is set before serv-ing.
6. Store loosely covered at room temperature.



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Things Every American Should Know About the Fourth of July

The Declaration of Independence Wasn't Actually Signed in July

On July 4, 1776, Congress officially adopted the Declaration of Independence, but it actually wasn't signed until almost a month later. When the declaration was officially approved on July 4, John Hancock and Charles Thompson (president and secretary of the Continental Congress) signed the draft that day. But the official copy wasn't signed by all 56 signers until August 2, 1776.

Fireworks Were John Adams' Idea

When John Adams wrote that letter predicting an annual Fourth of July celebration, he specifically called out one iconic tradition: Fireworks. He wrote that the holiday would be celebrated "with illuminations from one end of this continent to the other from this time forward, forevermore." And judging by the number of fireworks purchased each year (more on that below), I'd say he was correct.

Americans Spend \$1 Billion on Fireworks Each July

According to the American Pyrotechnics Association, Americans spend \$1 billion on fireworks each July. That's a lot of bottle rockets and sparklers (\$15, Walmart)! The APA estimates that price adds up to about 268 million pounds of fireworks sold each year.

George Washington Celebrated the Holiday with Rum

While many of us enjoy a red, white, and blue cocktail on the Fourth of July, George Washington may have been the first to start the tradition. On the second anniversary of the first Fourth of July, America was still fighting for independence in the Revolutionary War. George Washington ordered a double ration of rum for his soldiers (along with an artillery salute) to celebrate the holiday on July 4, 1778.

Americans Eat 155 million Hot Dogs Each Fourth of July

According to Forbes, 155 million hot dogs are consumed each Independence Day, setting Americans back \$104.7 million for the dogs and another \$70.4 million for the buns. If you're grilling up hot dogs this Fourth of July, try one of these 8 delicious combinations of toppings.

The First Fourth of July Was Celebrated in 1777

When the Declaration of Independence was finalized in July of 1776, future president John Adams wrote a letter to his wife Abigail, saying he expected the date to become an annual celebration in America—and he was right. In 1777, the first Fourth of July was celebrated with fireworks and parades.

...answers on page 43

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One President was Born on July 4

Calvin Coolidge was the first (and so far, the only) president to have been born on the Fourth of July. He was born on July 4, 1872, in Plymouth, Vermont, and went on to become president in 1923.

Three Presidents Have Died on July 4

While only one president has been born on Independence Day, three have died on the holiday. Presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson actually died on the same day, on July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Fourth of July. Later, President James Monroe died on July 4, 1831.

The First Person to Sign the Declaration of Independence Was Never President

John Hancock famously was the first person to sign the Declaration of Independence (that's where the phrase 'put your John Hancock here' originates), so many people falsely assume he became president at some point. Although he was president of the Continental Congress, John Hancock never became president of the United States.

There Are Only 2.5 million Original United States Citizens

Today, the United States has a population of more than 335 million, but on July 4, 1776, there were only 2.5 million people living in the United States. That means the population has grown by 13,200% since the first Independence Day.





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